

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L BUJUMBURA 1043

EXDIS

EO 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: PEDR, EAID, BY, CG, RW
SUBJECT: PRESIDENT BAGAZA EXPRESSES VIEWS ON TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND
ON ZAIRE

1. A EUROPEAN OFFICIAL WITH IMPORTANT TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE
RESPONSIBILITIES HAS BRIEFED WESTERN AMBASSADORS ON A NINETY
MINUTE MEETING HE HAD WITH PRESIDENT BAGAZA LAST WEEK.

2. PRESIDENT BAGAZA REPORTEDLY TOLD THE EUROPEAN THAT THERE WAS
A NEED FOR BETTER COOPERATION BETWEEN THE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE
PEOPLE AND THE POPULATION OF BURUNDI. THE PEOPLE WERE NOT AWARE
OF WHAT TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE HAD DONE FOR THEM AND THERE WAS NEED
FOR MORE CONTACT.

3. BAGAZA REPORTEDLY EXPRESSED THE VIEW THAT HE WOULD HAVE TO
THINK A BIT MORE ABOUT "NATIONALIZATION" BECAUSE HE DID NOT WANT
TO MAKE THE SAME ERROR THAT ZAIRE HAD MADE IN GETTING RID OF
FOREIGNERS TOO PRECIPITATELY. (ONE AMBASSADOR ASKED THE SOURCE IF
BAGAZA HAD SAID "NATIONALIZATION" OR "AFRICANIZATION". SOURCE
REPLIED: "NATIONALIZATION").

4. CONCERNING RELATIONS AMONG ZAIRE, RWANDA AND BURUNDI, BAGAZA
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WAS SAID TO HAVE REMARKED THAT ZAIRE WAS TOO STRONG AND THAT
BURUNDI WAS IN DANGER OF BEING SUFFOCATED BY ZAIRE'S ACTIONS.
THE DISAPPEARANCE OF MOBUTU WOULD BE AN IMPROVEMENT BECAUSE THINGS
WOULD BE BETTER WITH A NEW REGIME. BAGAZA WAS NOT CONVINCED THAT
THINGS WOULD GO BETTER BETWEEN ZAIRE AND ANGOLA IN THE FUTURE. THIS
WAS NOT THE FIRST TIME THE TWO COUNTRIES HAD EMBRACED EACH OTHER.

5. BETWEEN BURUNDI AND RWANDA, BAGAZA WAS REPORTED TO HAVE SAID, THINGS WOULD GO VERY WELL AND IT WOULD HELP IF AN INDUSTRY COULD BE DEVELOPED IN WHICH BOTH COULD PARTICIPATE, SUCH AS FERTILIZER OR CEMENT PRODUCTION. HOWEVER, ZAIRE WAS PLAYING CARDS AGAINST RWANDA AND BURUNDI. THERE WAS NEED FOR A BETTER BALANCE BETWEEN BURUNDI AND RWANDA ON THE ONE HAND AND ZAIRE ON THE OTHER.

5. ONE OF MY COLLEAGUES OBSERVED THAT THE REMARKS ATTRIBUTED TO BAGAZA WERE UNREALISTIC IN VIEW OF THE HISTORY OF EFFORTS FOR JOINT BURUNDI/RWANDA ECONOMIC COOPERATION. HE ADDED THAT BAGAZA'S STATEMENT ABOUT THE NEED FOR CLOSER CONTACTS BETWEEN TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PERSONNEL AND THE POPULATION CONTRADICTED BURUNDI POLICY OF GETTING RID OF COOPERANTS WHO DEVELOPED TBDA MANY CONTACTS. HE NOTED THAT BAGAZA'S COMMENTS ON ZAIRE GAVE A GOOD IDEA OF THE PROSPECTS FOR COOPERATION IN THAT DIRECTION.

6. COMMENT: THE REMARKS ATTRIBUTED TO BAGAZA DO INDEED SOUND UNREALISTIC AND CONTRADICTORY AND, INsofar AS THEY REFER TO ZAIRE, EXTREMELY INDISCREET. HOWEVER, THEY DO SEEM TO REFLECT FAITHFULLY THE MUDDLED BURUNDI APPROACH TO ASSISTANCE AND DEVELOPMENT MATTERS AND THE PERVADING SUSPICION OF ZAIRE.
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